“WELCOME & ALOHA from the Director”
By Linda Duckworth, Ph.D.
Director

Aloha! And welcome to Fall 2006 and the beginning of another exciting academic school year at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa! The International Student Services (ISS) is here to help you reach your academic, personal, and professional potential through our services and programs. For the latest information, visit the ISS web site at www.hawaii.edu/issmanoa and read your emails!

Here’s the latest in ISS updates:

1. **ISS and ISA welcome new international students** – Several programs and activities helped welcome new students and assist with initial adjustment to UH Manoa and local and North American cultures.
   a. The ISS coordinated three orientations to welcome our new international students and prepare them to transition to life as a student at UH Manoa.
   b. The ISS Mentor Program, coordinated by ISS intern, Anna Miyoshi, paired up 63 experienced mentors with 108 new mentees. Mentor activities have included a welcome party, going to a UH Manoa volleyball game, visiting the Waikiki Aquarium and Sunset on the Beach, and hiking Diamond Head Trail.
   c. The ISA (International Student Association) organized a terrific welcome party on the first Friday evening of the semester. One of the most memorable events of the evening was an instrumental duet performed on the samisen and ukelele by a sophomore art major from Japan and a local student from Hawai‘i, demonstrating a wonderful blend of cultures. Students were so mesmerized while listening to the performance, one could have heard a pin drop! **Upcoming activities:** Kung Fu 101, Hiking Manoa Falls, and Ala Moana Beach Park Picnic.

2. **International Student Statistics** – Fall 2006 international student statistics indicate that 43% are enrolled at the undergraduate level and 57% are enrolled at the graduate level of study – and that women outnumber the men by 14%. Total international student enrollment is 1,779 – a slight increase of 26 students from Fall 2005.

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3. **Reorganization of International Education at UH Manoa** – The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Dr. Neal Smatresk, recently appointed Dr. Edward Shultz the new Interim Assistant Vice Chancellor for International Programs and Exchange at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.
For the first time, the following offices are being reorganized under one umbrella of international education: Faculty & Scholar Services, International Exchanges, International Student Services, National Student Exchange and Study Abroad. The directors of these offices have started to meet together with Dr. Shultz in order to determine how best to work together to promote international education on our campus. Special thanks to the Office of International Programs and Exchange for providing pizza for the upcoming seminar on “Date Violence,” on Monday, October 30th, from 4:30 – 6:00 pm in QLC Student Services Building 412.

4. **NEW Ombuds Office meets with ISS** – Assistant Director Martha Staff and I met with Dr. Neal Milner, the new director of the Ombuds Office for the university, to discuss how our two offices can work together to help international students. Dr. Milner is a long-time, well-respected faculty member at UH Manoa. His well-known integrity and wealth of resource information makes him the perfect choice to fill this new position.

The Ombuds Office offers help to ALL members of the University community in solving problems that range from overcoming practical difficulties to handling sensitive ethical conflicts and responding to experiences of rudeness, abuse or stigmatization.

Examples of issues brought to the Ombuds Office could include harassment, workplace disputes, ethics, registration, incivility, safety concerns, academic dishonesty, discrimination, or housing issues.

All of its services are confidential, informal and impartial.

It is located in Krauss 22, near Outreach College. For more information, call us at 956-3391 or visit its web site at [www.manoa.hawaii.edu/ombuds](http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/ombuds).

5. **Updates on ISS Web Site** – As promised at the Fall 2006 ISS orientations, the ISS power point presentation, entitled “Staying Legal,” and the ISS International Student Handbook have both been posted at [www.hawaii.edu/issmanoa](http://www.hawaii.edu/issmanoa). Check it out.

6. **Survivor of the 6.7 Hawaiʻi Earthquake** – Was this your first experience in an earthquake, like me?! On Sunday, October 15, 2006, I was already up and getting ready to go walking for my daily exercise, when the floor started vibrating as if a huge heavy truck was rumbling by. I looked out my window and sleepily thought, today’s not garbage day – why was the floor shaking? All of a sudden, the floor, mirror on my dresser, my entire apartment was shaking as if I was in the spin cycle of a washing machine! Shocked, I stood frozen in front of my dresser, rooted to the shaking floor, looking up at the ceiling (and apartment) above me. I think I was looking to see if any cracks were forming above my head. And then it stopped. I looked around and saw no immediate damage or danger, but still decided to forego my walk that morning!

Next time, I now know not to stand rooted to the floor looking up at the ceiling, but to go stand in a doorframe where there will be more support and protection from possible overhead debris. I hope your survivor experience was less traumatic and that all is well.

7. **Changes in Scholarships for International Students** – Changes are coming for the APTDE (Asia Pacific Tuition Differential Exemption) merit scholarship. In July 2006, the Board of Regents passed a policy creating new international scholarships in lieu of the APTDE. Effective Fall 2007, international students will no longer be able to apply for the APTDE merit scholarship for students from select Asia and Pacific Island countries. Instead, a new merit scholarship is being created for new international
students who meet selective criteria. This scholarship will be open to international students from all countries. Details of merit and other eligibility criteria, as well the amount and the length of the scholarship, are currently being discussed among the UH administration. As soon as details are made available, we will send you an email and post on the ISS web site.

An important part of the new scholarship policy is that continuing international students with the APTDE scholarship will be able to keep, or “grandfather,” the APTDE beyond Fall 2007 through completion of program. So, if you currently have the APTDE or will receive the APTDE for Spring 2007, you will be able to keep the APTDE until you graduate, as long as you continue to meet current eligibility criteria. Again, we will send you email and post details on the ISS web site as soon as they are made available.

8. Need Your INPUT of ISS Services and Advisers – YOU tell us! In the coming weeks, ISS will be asking for your help to evaluate our ISS services and advisers. Every two years, ISS conducts a student satisfaction survey of ISS services and, each semester, a student satisfaction survey of an advising appointment with a particular ISS adviser. These evaluations are for you to tell us how we are doing so that we can improve our services and programs. We look forward to your input!
Reinstatement Processing Change

As of October 30, 2006, the Honolulu office of the US Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) no longer processes reinstatement applications for students who have failed to maintain their F-1 visa status. All reinstatement applications (I-539 forms) are now processed at the California Service Center (CSC). The ISS has received excellent service from the Honolulu USCIS office in the past several years; we are hopeful that similar responsive service will be provided from CSC. The USCIS had earlier announced it would stop processing I-539 forms on October 1. The delay in moving processing caused confusion for some students applying for reinstatement.

Changes in EAD Production

USCIS has discontinued local production of employment authorization documents. Currently all Form I-765 Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) are produced at one central location using secure national systems. Local USCIS offices can still assist customers with the process of obtaining an interim employment document, when USCIS has failed to adjudicate the I-765 application within 90 days. After September 1, 2006, however, local offices were required to forward such requests for centralized processing, rather than processing them locally.

EAD Renewal

USCIS recommends that an applicant seeking to replace an expiring EAD should file Form I-765 at least 100 days before the current card expires. Doing so will minimize the possibility that the current EAD will expire before a decision is made on the new application. Among students and their dependents, this advice impacts F-1 students on Economic Hardship work permits and J-2 employment permits. Both of these EAD categories are processed for one year at a time, but may be renewed.

New Port-of-Entry Web Site


H-1B Cap Reached

The Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has announced that approximately 65,000 H1B visas for the year beginning October 1, 2006 were exhausted within a span of less than 2 months on May 26, and the additional 20,000 Advanced Degree H-1B visas were exhausted on July 26th. Note that institutions of higher education and research institutions are exempt from the H1B cap.

Anticipated Change in Entry Requirements for Canadians/Mexicans

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has proposed a requirement that beginning January 8, 2007, United States citizens and nonimmigrant aliens from Canada, Mexico and Bermuda entering the United States at air ports-of-entry and most sea ports-of-entry present a valid passport. Currently, citizens of these nations are exempt from the passport requirement. Individuals entering the US from a land port-of-entry would continue to be exempt from the passport requirement. The proposal would implement Section 7209 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTPA). The CBP is currently reviewing public comments on the proposal and has not yet formally adopted this requirement. Note, however, that student visa regulations already require all F-1 students to have a valid passport at all times. The passport is also part of the normal documentation required of students accepting employment in the US. Therefore, the ISS will continue to advise that all F-1 students, including Canadians and Mexicans, have a valid passport while in the US.
Home Away From Home
By Ray Allen, Ph. D.
International Student Advisor

When Danita Dumadag-Hugh, secretary at International Student Services (ISS), first started as a clerk/steno fifteen years ago, she typed out I-20s and used carbon paper to make copies. In those days ISS did not use computers to process I-20s and, although copy machines existed, I-20s came in a form with carbon copies. The technology at that time just included a basic typewriter, a copy machine and a good supply of liquid white out.

Danita has seen many changes over the years at ISS – staff, students, location, kinds of office equipment, etc. But the biggest change, she states, has been in the area of technology, especially in the use of computers. This change is closely followed by a non-technical area – ensuring compliance to Federal immigration rules and regulations. Both have made dramatic changes in the nature of the work, in her view, at ISS.

Before coming to ISS, Danita worked at Waiahole Elementary School as a coordinator of parent involvement programs. In addition, Danita also worked at the Kaneohe Kahalu`u Community Center helping senior citizens and assisting in after-school programs and the food bank.

On a personal note, Danita is very family (‘ohana) oriented. She is married and has two boys and two girls. All are in their twenties living in Las Vegas and in Germany. Two of her children, one of whom has a son, are married (she misses her grandson and visits him on the Mainland whenever possible). On Sundays you can find her teaching Sunday school and playing the guitar with her choir at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Waikane.

Today, Danita, as secretary of ISS, brings her ‘ohana spirit to ISS in a number of areas as she helps international students with maintaining their status while studying in the U.S. In her view, her most important task (especially because of her ‘ohana) is to make the ISS office a “home away from home” by bringing some “aloha” for the international students studying here. She takes care of, she adds, the “soup and nuts” needs of both students and staff. Her “aloha,” by-the-way, includes organizing some of the best pot lucks (for the ISS office) on the campus.

Danita Dumadag-Hugh is not only a secretary at ISS, but is the “heart” of ISS. The caring and love she brings to her work does, in fact, make ISS a “home away from home,” not only for the students who visit ISS, but for the staff who work at ISS as well.

Sun in Paradise
By Ray Allen, Ph. D.
International Student Advisor

Xing Sun (Sophie), the volunteer coordinator of the ISS Spouse Program, arrived in Hawai`i in December, 2005. Originally from Jiamusi, the fourth largest city in Heilongjiang Province in China, Sophie is majoring in Apparel Product Design and Merchandising and hopes to become a merchandiser in the fashion industry. Interestingly, Sophie is not the first person in her family to work in this industry. She had a grandmother and an aunt back in China who were seamstresses for many years.

Upon arriving in Honolulu, one of the first impressions Sophie had was of the number of beautiful trees in the city (she loves trees). She states that Honolulu, because of its large number of trees, looks like an “emerald city.” However, Sophie continues, although the trees of Honolulu are beautiful, her biggest delight in arriving in Hawai`i was Haunauma Bay. And, in addition to Honolulu’s green beauty and beautiful bays, she adds, the weather is very good and the people are very friendly.

While at UHM, Sophie is not only studying merchandising, but is also studying Italian. Some of the most beautiful clothes in the world, she notes, are coming from Italy. And, on a musical note, she also plays the Guzheng, a Chinese string instrument that lies horizontal when one plays it.

Since arriving in Hawai`i, Sophie feels she can now better understand her own cultural background because she’s outside of China. In many ways, she states, she is now rediscovering her culture and wants to bring it more in the open. She notes that some students from China seek to “blend in” culturally. In this sense, their culture remains
hidden in the larger society. She, in contrast, wants to acknowledge her Chinese heritage and make it stand out wherever she goes.

Xing Sun loves the sun’s light and the sun’s heat in Hawai`i. And like the sun in our tropical sky, Xing Sun also brings light and warmth to the islands through her studies, through her music, through the Spouse program, which she is helping to develop and coordinate, and through her warm and bright personality. The light from her face, literally, brightens any room she enters and, as well, leaves it a little warmer after she’s left.

“New” Spouse Program
By Ray Allen, Ph. D.
International Student Advisor

This fall sees the beginnings of a “new” Spouse Program that really isn’t new as it was a part of International Student Services (ISS) programs several years ago. Xing Sun (Sophie), an international student from China (see article), re-started the program this fall in order to provide activities for the spouses of international students attending the University of Hawai`i at Mānoa (UHM).

Many of these spouses, being in F-2 status, are prevented from going to school and from working. Because of these restrictions, there is, sometimes, little or nothing to do for a number of them. The Spouse Program seeks to address this situation by having a series of monthly events spouses and their families can participate in.

The first program occurred on Friday, October 20. “A Walk in Waikiki” involved strolling along Kalakaua Ave. in Waikiki, tasting and enjoying the sights and sounds, both natural and man-made, of Hawai`i’s major tourist destination, Waikiki. Sophie, who coordinated the walk, reported that she saw a series of spectacular sunsets (see banner photograph top of front page).

We hope that all spouses and their families can participate in one or more future events. Program information will be sent out through e-mail. So, keep checking your e-mail for announcements.
To ensure you can accomplish both your educational and personal plans in the upcoming months, below are listed ISS services that you may use as well as the processing time for each.

**TRAVELING:**
- Bring your I-20 for travel signature
- Complete the ISS Travel Notification
- If you are planning to be enrolled at UHM while abroad, complete the ISS Certification of Academic Status form before leaving U.S.
- If you plan to be on Leave of Absence, see Leave of Absence instruction.
- PROCESSING TIME: 3 Work days

**OBTAINING SOCIAL SECURITY**
Social Security Administration (SSA) now requires all F-1 students who apply for a social security number, to first obtain a specific job offer. This is a major change in policy, but it only impacts students who do not already have a SSN. How to obtain a social security form from ISS:
- Obtain a letter of employment on employer letterhead with original signature of employer and Designated School Official (DSO) in ISS.
- Use the On or Off Campus employment Verification templates used by F-1 students to apply for a Social Security Number on ISS website at: [http://www.hawaii.edu/issmanoa/sevis_social%20security](http://www.hawaii.edu/issmanoa/sevis_social%20security)
- Bring unofficial Transcript (MyUHPortal)
- Current US address (My UHPortal)
- PROCESSING TIME: 3 Work days

**REDUCE COURSE LOAD OF I-20**
- Submit ISS Reduce Course Load form completed by student and department advisor.
- Submit unofficial transcript
- Pickup new 3rd page of I-20
- PROCESSING TIME: 10 work days

**PROCESSING I-20/DS2019**
- Correction or change of level, major, funding of I-20/DS2019
- I-20 that indicates “Initial” on item # 3 requires a new updated I-20 certifying “continued attendance”:
- F-2/J-2 Request:
- PROCESSING TIME: 10 work days

**WORK PERMITS**
- OPT: PROCESSING TIME: 15 Work Days, OPT photos will be taken after OPT workshops. $5 (please have correct change)
- CPT: PROCESSING TIME: 10 Work Days
- On Campus Authorization: On the Spot. (Bring passport)
- Economic Hardship: 15 Work Days

**CERTIFICATION LETTERS**
- Passport/Invitation/Certification Letters: PROCESSING TIME: 10 Work Days
- Visa Renewal letter no longer needed.

**OTHER PROCESSINGS**
- Transfer Out: 10 Work Days
- Note: Canadian loan documents are no longer processed at ISS. Please request signature from the Registrar, QLC Rm 010.

**BY APPOINTMENT WITH ADVISOR:**
- REINSTSTATEMENT
- CHANGE OF STATUS
Helpful Reminder If you received an email from ISS and have questions, bring it to ISS and we will be happy to help.

International Student Services Student Assistants and Interns